

TEAM OF RIVALS

Lincoln's Cabinet at the Crossroads of War

A Civil War Sesquicentennial Exhibition

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Indiana's Caleb B. Smith featured in Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum's upcoming "Team of Rivals" Exhibit

***Artifacts from Lincoln's Secretary of the Interior will be displayed
with original Lincoln and Fort Sumter items to commemorate
150th anniversary of Civil War***

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Congressman Caleb B. Smith of Indiana was considered a more compelling public speaker than Abraham Lincoln. Observers of Smith's stump speeches said that you could "feel the blood tingling through your veins to your finger ends and all the way up your spine." He was one of the few people who went to the 1860 Republican Convention as a delegate for Lincoln, and he was rewarded for his loyalty with the Secretary of the Interior's post in President Lincoln's Cabinet. As the nation prepares to observe the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, a new exhibit opening October 14 at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Illinois will use original artifacts from Smith, other Cabinet members and Fort Sumter to bring to life one of the darkest and most uncertain periods in United States history.

Titled *Team of Rivals* after the book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author and renowned presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, the exhibit will feature many original artifacts that will be publicly displayed for the first time. It will also use innovative video components and creative productions to immerse visitors in the tumultuous days leading up to the Civil War. Goodwin will act as the personal tour guide throughout the exhibit with recorded videos that narrate each section. She will also be on hand to open the exhibit and deliver a public program October 14 – for ticket information, visit www.presidentlincoln.org.

Original Smith artifacts that will be part of the *Team of Rivals* exhibit include: A cup and saucer belonging to Smith, in a pattern closely resembling the Lincoln White House china; a "Department of the Interior" embroidered period bath towel; and Smith's portable lap desk and inkwell. These items are being loaned specifically for the Team of Rivals exhibit by the Indiana State Museum, www.indianamuseum.org.

"The members of Abraham Lincoln's cabinet, his 'Team of Rivals,' played a fundamental role in some of the most critical events in American history. The Indiana State

Museum is proud to have made a small contribution to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum's compelling presentation of this story," said Indiana State Museum Senior Curator of Cultural History Dale Ogden.

The *Team of Rivals* will also feature original artifacts from Fort Sumter, including items relating to the two commanders, Brig. Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard and U.S. Major Robert Anderson; a section of wall, a mortar shell and friction primer wire, all from the Battle of Fort Sumter; and other remnants of the action that began the Civil War.

Original Abraham Lincoln items in the exhibit include the original desk and inkwell Lincoln used to draft his First Inaugural Address, as well as the galley proofs of the speech; and a Lincoln signed original April 19, 1861 authorization to blockade Southern ports, a document many feel was the first official declaration of war by the Union. Also included is a letter Lincoln wrote to New York school boy George Patten in March 1861, as the entire nation was plunging toward war, to confirm for George's skeptical schoolmates that he had indeed met the President-elect.

Team of Rivals will include Smith's story and offer insights into the man and his contributions to American history. Caleb Blood Smith was born April 16, 1808 in Massachusetts, studied law in Ohio, and was admitted to the bar in Indiana in 1828. He established and edited the *Indiana Sentinel* in Connersville, Indiana in 1832, served seven terms in the Indiana legislature, including one as Speaker of the Indiana House, and was in Congress as a Whig from 1843 to 1849. He was appointed by President Zachary Taylor a member of the board to investigate claims of American citizens against Mexico and was a member of the peace convention of 1861 held in Washington, D.C., in an effort to devise means to prevent the impending Civil War.

Smith was influential in securing the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency at the 1860 Republican Convention and, in fact, seconded the nomination on the convention floor. Lincoln appointed Smith as Secretary of the Interior in 1861 as a reward for his work in the presidential campaign. He was the first citizen of Indiana to hold a Presidential Cabinet position.

Smith didn't live up to expectations and seemed irked by administrative burdens. He complained about the crush of job applications in the patronage-rich Interior Department, and then proceeded to fill positions with family and friends. His biggest impact on administration policy was his support for schemes to colonize former slaves and free blacks in Central America. These efforts resulted in embarrassing failures.

Smith's support of the Emancipation Proclamation was tepid at best, fearing it would cost the Republicans Indiana in the upcoming election. Thinking judicial work would be less taxing than the Secretary of the Interior's position, he lobbied for the federal district judgeship in Indianapolis. Lincoln obliged in January 1863. A year later, Smith died suddenly in his judge's chambers, not living long enough to witness Lincoln's re-election or the successful end to the war.

Smith disagreed with Lincoln about provisioning South Carolina's Fort Sumter after numerous federal installations had been seized by the seceding Southern states. When asked by the President to express his opinion, Smith wrote: "The effect of such an attempt, whether

successful or not, would be the early loss of the Fort, and the destruction, or capture, of Maj. Anderson's command. It would therefore in my judgment be unwise to attempt to supply the fort."

The *Team of Rivals* exhibit will first demonstrate how Lincoln chose his initial Presidential cabinet, composing it of men with differing viewpoints, some of whom were his opponents for the 1860 Republican Presidential nomination. They include William H. Seward of New York, Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury; Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, Secretary of War; Gideon Welles of Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith of Indiana, Secretary of the Interior; Edward Bates of Missouri, Attorney General; and Montgomery Blair of Maryland, Postmaster General. Seward, Chase, Cameron and Bates all vied with Lincoln for the Republican nomination.

Visitors entering *Team of Rivals* will then learn about Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, then see a digital map that notes the Federal installations taken over by the Southern states before and during Secession. A corridor will follow the military and political path toward war as some of Lincoln's own Cabinet members work behind his back to undermine his authority. Fort Sumter will be examined before, during and after the battle that started the Civil War. The final section will feature in-depth information about Lincoln's Cabinet members along with displays of some of their personal possessions.

Team of Rivals will open October 14, 2010, just prior to the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's election as President in November 2010, his Farewell Address to Springfield as President-elect in February 2011, and the start of the Civil War in April 2011.

For more information about *Team of Rivals* or other programs and exhibits at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, visit www.presidentlincoln.org.

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